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REPORT OF AN AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
EXPEDITION IN SYRIA, 1899-1900

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IN the summer of 1899 an expedition was organized, under the patronage of four New York gentlemen: Mr. V. Everit Macy, Mr. I. Newton Stokes, Messrs. Clarence and B. T. B. Hyde, to explore the portions of central Syria visited by M. de Vogüé in 1861-1862.

In the above year Count Melchior de Vogüé, now the Marquis de Vogüé, made an expedition into Syria, and published his discoveries in a work entitled *La Syrie Centrale*. He reported a large number of ruined cities and towns in a deserted mountain country to the east of the Orontes and in the Ḥaurân.

During the forty years which have elapsed since these well-known explorations, the results of which M. de Vogüé published in his great work in 1865-1877, and the epigraphical, archaeological, and historical publications of M. Waddington, who was, for a time, associated with M. de Vogüé in the explorations, little or no scientific research has been carried on in these regions. A number of German scholars have visited portions of the country, chiefly for the study of the inscriptions, and the Baron von Oppenheim has made several tours which embraced those districts more easily reached; but the greater portion of the deserted mountain regions, partially explored by M. de Vogüé, and the outlying districts which he mentioned as an extensive field for archaeological research, but which he was unable to reach on the occasion of his visit, have remained unexplored up to the present time.

The fact that extensive tracts, within a comparatively short distance of civilization, and full of important archaeological monuments, should remain unvisited for so many years after their existence had been made known and their importance set forth in a well-recognized and much-studied publication, would seem an anomaly but for the prevailing prejudice on the part of archaeologists against explorations in post-classical fields and the well-known difficulties and supposed dangers connected with travel in those localities.

The regions in question, those visited by M. de Vogüé, embrace, first, a system of mountains running north and south, far to the east of the lower half of the Amanus range, bounded on the east by the level and fertile plain which borders on the great desert that stretches away toward the Euphrates valley, and extending from a point a little to the north of the modern town of Ḥamā (the ancient Epiphanea) to the mountain of Shêkh Berekât, situated to the southeast of Alexandretta. The caravan route from the above port to Aleppo passes in a broad curve to the north of this mountain. The region is traversed by an unfrequented caravan route between Antioch and Aleppo and a still more disused route leading from Lādiḳīyeh over the lowest portion of the system to Ma'arrit-in-Nu'mân. Secondly, the mountain district of the Ḥaurân, which has been sufficiently well mapped and needs no locating. The first region, the more northern, is practically a rocky desert. In consequence presumably of the destruction of the trees and terrace walls, the soil has been gradually washed from the ridges and mountain sides, leaving the skeleton of limestone completely bare so far as the eye can reach. Wherever the contours of the hills form a pocket in which the soil could lodge there is verdure, and here sufficient pasture is found for a few small herds of sheep and goats that afford a livelihood to the sparse population which has collected in small communities and settled in a few villages, built often out of the ruins of ancient towns. Rain falls annually for a few weeks in torrents that have swept away the soil; it is caught and preserved by

the inhabitants in ancient cisterns. This supply serves for the year until the next rainy season. There are neither springs nor wells. Thus the water question is a very serious barrier to explorers. The Haurân is less barren and is now well populated, but the inhabitants—the Druses—are in constant rebellion against the Ottoman government, and the officials of the Sultan are loath to allow foreigners to travel beyond the Turkish garrisons which form a cordon on the western, northern, and southern confines of the district.

Both regions are the resort of Bedawin tribes, and the Turkish government will not be responsible for the safety of foreigners who travel without a military escort, not only on account of the tribes, but because of the character of the settled inhabitants, who have not a savory reputation for honesty or hospitality. These, then, have been the main obstacles in the way of exploration, the scarcity of water, the difficulty of approach, and the supposed hostility of the inhabitants, which have led the Ottoman government to withhold permission from those who would travel in that portion of the empire.

The importance of M. de Vogüé's researches has long been admitted. No history of ancient architecture has been written in recent years that has not drawn largely upon his work for material to bridge over the great gap in monuments between the end of the third and beginning of the sixth century. The inscriptions which he and his colaborer, M. Waddington, published were of recognized historical and linguistic value; but, with the exception of the extension of their work by some German scholars, along the line of philological studies, and the taking of a few photographs of the monuments most easily within reach, the work of M. de Vogüé has not even been corroborated.

The present expedition was organized in order, first, to follow up the researches of M. de Vogüé, with more thorough surveys of the various districts, with careful photographic study of the monuments published by him in drawings, with extensive measurements of those monuments, and the copying of all

inscriptions. Secondly, to extend the research in the same regions, as suggested by M. de Vogüé, and to determine, if possible, the geographical limits of the architecture characteristic of this region.

The work of the expedition was divided into three general sections: one for topography and the study of general natural phenomena; one for epigraphy and historical research; the third for architecture, sculpture, and matters purely archaeological.

The first of these was in charge of Mr. Robert Garrett; the second section was divided into two parts, classical and Semitic, the former in charge of Dr. William Kelly Prentice, and the latter of Dr. Enno Littmann of Oldenburg, Germany. The third was directed by the writer.

In October, 1899, the expedition entered Syria at Alexandretta and travelled by way of Antioch into the northern section of central Syria, embracing three general mountain divisions, the Djebel il-A'la, the Djebel Bārisha, and the Djebel Ḥalakah.

Here eight weeks were spent in making district surveys, in examining the monuments, taking photographs and measurements in detail, and in copying inscriptions.

All the existing maps were soon found to be not only insufficient, but inaccurate, and a more careful survey was made of two large groups of towns, showing their directions and distances from one another.

All of the towns mentioned by M. de Vogüé were visited by the expedition, and some thirty others which he did not see. In the towns from which he published monuments, photographs and measurements of all important buildings were taken. In most cases all the published inscriptions were found and in many instances inscriptions heretofore unknown were discovered.

The greater number of inscriptions were in Greek of the Christian era, but a sufficient number of Syriac inscriptions was found, all but one of which were previously unknown, to

call the attention of Semitic scholars in that direction. Among the towns which M. de Vogüé did not see, and which have as yet never been published, there were some visited by us which were destitute of inhabitants, and the remains of which were therefore in a remarkable state of preservation. Some were even richer in inscriptions than those described by M. de Vogüé, and the number of dated inscriptions was here surprisingly large.

The architectural remains, as presented in M. de Vogüé's book, belong chiefly to late classical and early Byzantine styles. The dated structures cover a period from the middle of the second century to the beginning of the seventh. There are no remains of mediaeval style, the only sign of Mohammedan occupation being an occasional building of ancient foundation, rudely fortified by the Arabs, and the presence here and there of mediaeval Arabic tombstones with inscriptions usually bearing dates.

M. de Vogüé published only two distinctly classic pagan monuments from this northern region, both of which were tombs. The present expedition found, besides a number of tombs which were undoubtedly of pagan origin, a temple of the time of the Emperor Antoninus Pius, with a dated dedicatory inscription.

Every one of the newly found towns possesses a ruined church; some of them as many as three. These buildings present an interesting variety of dimensions, plans, and decorative details. None of the churches published by M. de Vogüé seems to have been dated by an inscription, while the majority of those now about to be published are so dated — the dates ranging from 403–609 A.D.

The greatest variety exists in the forms and styles of tombs. There are many large monumental structures; some with pyramidal roofs, a number which consist simply of huge sarcophagi elevated upon pedestals, and a great number of more or less elaborate rock-cut tombs, many of which are ornamented with built façades.

Most interesting of all, however, are the remains of public and domestic architecture. There is nowhere so extensive

illustration of the domestic architecture of the ancients, excepting, of course, in the Pompeian remains, as that to be found in the drawings and descriptions of M. de Vogüé. The remains upon the Bay of Naples are not architectural in the truest sense, presenting as they do the most crude methods of construction. But the houses of the deserted cities of northern Syria are wonderful monuments of architecture, interesting as studies of style and construction, as well as of plan and arrangement, and in their relation to the civilization of the time.

There are houses of all classes and sizes, of two and three, and even five stories ; there are villas of the wealthy, the town houses of the well to do, the houses of the moderately well off, and the small compartment houses of the poorer classes ; but all are well built, all are more or less decorated, and all are of the highest interest for the history of domestic architecture. Many of these houses are well preserved, and a number of them are dated, the only dated houses of antiquity known, so far as I am aware. Public buildings are naturally rarer. Among those which are best preserved are several baths and the colonnades (*stoae*) which were undoubtedly used for shops. It will be seen at once that a group of buildings, of various classes and types, and all definitely dated, presents a subject for study quite unique in the history of architecture.

It has been said above that the styles of architecture represented in these regions were chiefly late classic and Byzantine, but this statement should be made with reserve ; for although the pagan architecture is distinctly Roman classic of a high order, the later architecture partakes only to a limited degree of the characteristics of the Byzantine style, as we know it in other parts of the world. Nor yet does it conform to the type which has been designated as early Christian, in countries strongly influenced by Rome, but presents new forms and motives which are peculiar to the locality, and are unique so far as we are able to know.

The churches built in northern Syria at the beginning of the fifth century cannot be compared for a moment with buildings

that were being constructed in Rome or in Constantinople at the same time. In fact, there are comparatively few buildings extant that can be authoritatively assigned to that period, but, from what has been definitely determined with regard to the style of that time, we know that churches were built very crudely of concrete and brick, and adorned with ornament stolen from classic monuments. Whatever *was* original in architecture or sculpture was crude and ungainly in the extreme. In northern Syria, on the other hand, churches were built on the same basilical plan that prevailed over all the Roman world, but upon constructional principles that were not surpassed in the best periods of classical antiquity. It is only fair to admit that the abundance, in the immediate neighborhood, of the most perfect building material, influenced this perfection of technique to some extent, but this may not be said of the architectural decoration. Much of the earlier ornament, though not taken from the ruins of classic buildings, departs but little from classic models. The proportions of the columns, the profiles of bases and of mouldings, the capitals, are all designed on classic lines, and, in most cases, cannot be considered as a debasement of classic motives. It is only in the treatment of windows and doors, details to which the Romans gave but slight study, that we find a decided departure from classic designs.

There are so few remains of the domestic architecture of Roman classic and Byzantine times, that one can hardly compare the houses in northern Syria with any well-known types. But the ground plans which they exhibit are totally different from those in Pompeii or in other places where scantier remains have been found. There is an interesting variety of plans and arrangement. In method of building, the private architecture differs in no way from the religious. Houses, small and great, were constructed with the same attention to minuteness and detail in matters of stone cutting and laying. In the architectural ornament of domestic buildings, the architects of northern Syria give the broadest scope to their own



genius in the treatment of their superposed colonnades. They departed absolutely from the rules laid down by Vitruvius and composed orders to suit their own fancy, using certain suggestions from the ancient types, but infusing entirely new feeling and mixing styles as no Roman could ever have done. The results are curiously effective and not inartistic, showing a power of originality that had been wholly dead in Rome for over a hundred years.

In the early tomb structures, the same spirit is manifest. The general plan of a classic temple, *distyle in antis*, is often taken. The porch with the columns and pediment are used; the exterior form of the rest of the building preserves classic lines, but the details, the capitals, the dentil mouldings, the cornice, are all infused with motives foreign to Greece and Rome, and not found in the later so-called Byzantine.

Of sculpture, this northern region is curiously barren. In Dêhes, one of the towns visited by M. de Vogüé, is a rock-cut tomb, which he obviously did not see. This tomb is of the rock-cut variety, entered by a narrow staircase by which one descends from the level of the ground. It is a large, square chamber, each of the two sides of which is occupied by two deep, arched arcossolia, each embracing two sarcophagi. The spaces between the arches are ornamented with low reliefs representing pagan subjects, and the sides of the sarcophagi are carved to represent Roman couches. At the back of each arcossolium is a bust in relief representing the deceased.

When the Djebel il-A'la and the Djebel Bārisha had been explored from north to south, the expedition descended into the plain on the east, and moved northward again, crossing one side of the circular chain of the Djebel Ḥalaḡah by a marvellous fragment of Roman military road extending, in a perfect state of preservation, for upwards of 1200 m. This brought us into the high plain within the circle of Djebel Ḥalaḡah (*ring*). Here two towns mentioned by M. de Vogüé, — Dana and Sermeda, — both of them inhabited, were visited. Then we moved into the foothills of the opposite side of the ring, at

the foot of the great mountain of the whole region — Shêkh Berekât.

In these foothills, the site of Dêr Termânîn was visited, where M. de Vogüé found one of his largest and most beautiful churches ; but only a few stones of it now remain *in situ*, the rest having been taken to build the small modern village of Termânîn that finds subsistence in the fertile little plain of Dana. The next move was to a small village at the very foot of Shêkh Berekât, from which excursions were made to the top of the mountain and to the group of deserted towns, northeastward from the mountain, in the neighborhood of Ka'at Sim'ân, a district thoroughly explored and well published by M. de Vogüé, and occasionally visited by travellers since his time.

Standing on the top of the isolated hill upon which the great church of St. Simeon stands, one may see a number of ruined, deserted towns within a radius of four or five miles ; but looking toward the north across the broad plain, in the direction of the Kurd mountains, no ruins are to be seen so far as the eye can reach, and the natives say that there are none in the mountains beyond.

From this, the extreme northern limit reached by M. de Vogüé, the expedition moved toward the east, and soon came into a rolling country, barren and rocky, that stretches away toward Aleppo. We had not proceeded far before coming upon an isolated ruin which seems to have been a small town. The other buildings are completely dilapidated, but the church is one of the best-preserved examples in Syria — every stone is in place, only the wooden roofs and doors are wanting to make it a practical house of worship. It is of the ordinary basilical plan, with two rows of columns supporting arches, with apse and side chapels, with long lines of clerestory windows all intact, a typical example showing the scheme upon which all the ruined churches of this type in the region may be restored.

Passing through Aleppo we travelled on to the Euphrates, but soon found ourselves beyond the limits of the region where

the monuments that we had been studying in the mountains are to be found. Membidj, the site of ancient Hierapolis, was visited, but was found to be little more than a series of mounds, surrounded by remains of a wall, with architectural and sculptured fragments in marble lying about or half buried in the soil. In fact, the ruin is like all ancient sites which have been built upon again and again during the middle ages and in modern times. A glance will serve to show that there could have been but slight artistic connection between ruins of this type and those of the mountains. Europos — the modern Djerābīs — is another such ruin, though here the ancient Hittite foundations add great interest, for this is understood to be the site of the Hittite capital, Karkemish.

About the middle of December winter set in, and the expedition made its way back to the coast, passing from Aleppo down the plain by way of Ḥamā to Ḥomṣ, from there out to the sea at Tripoli, and then along the coast to Beirût, where the outfit laid up for two months.

By the first of March the expedition was again under way. The number of the party had been increased by one, on the arrival of Mr. Henry M. Huxley, who had come out from the United States to become the anthropologist of the expedition and to study the various races between the Lebanon mountains and the Euphrates. A few weeks later, at Aleppo, the expedition was augmented by the distinguished addition to its number of Dr. George E. Post, of the Syrian Protestant College at Beirût. Dr. Post spent six weeks with the expedition, gathering material for the extension of his well-known work, the *Flora of Syria, Palestine and Sinai*. We passed the Lebanon mountains at once and moved through Ba'albek, northward to Ḥomṣ, from which place an excursion was made northeastward into the plain to Selemyeh, the ancient Salaminias. As in the case of all inhabited towns, there are few buildings preserved on this site, but fragments abound, from which it is not difficult to form a conception of the ancient monuments.

The first important point of difference between these remains and those in the mountains further northwest is seen in the material, which here is almost exclusively a black basaltic stone, very hard, in which details were wrought with difficulty. There are remains of classic buildings in the shape of column shafts of polished granite and capitals of white marble; but the structures of the Christian period were entirely of the black stone, so far as we can judge. The second difference is seen in the use of this building material, which was difficult to quarry in quadrated blocks, and for this reason was employed in rough and uneven fragments, laid often in mortar. The third difference lies in the treatment of decorative details, which was of course consequent upon the great difference in material. But, strangely enough, the tendency here is far more decided in the direction of the style which has been called early Christian than in the mountains described above. All the carving is necessarily flat and coarse. The capitals are, generally speaking, nothing short of a debasement of the classic orders. Mouldings are rare, as in the Byzantine style, and ornament for long narrow surfaces, whether in the nature of door jambs or of a frieze, is almost invariably of the grapevine pattern, which was such a favorite symbol of the early Church. The inscriptions here are of peculiar interest, not only for the dates which they furnish for the prevalent architectural style, but for the form in which they are executed,—a great majority of them having letters in relief and of unusual shape.

The expedition then made its way to the northwest, through *Ḥamā*, to the southern end of the *Djebel Riḥa*, which forms the lower part of the mountain district visited in the autumn, and was also explored by M. de Vogüé. At the southern point of this range is situated *Ḳalʿat il-Muḍiḳ*, the ancient *Apamea*, where there are extensive remains of the old Greco-Roman city, but all overthrown and for the most part buried. The ruins embrace a much-dilapidated circuit-wall with one of the city gates, two large detached buildings, and long lines of half-buried colonnades. The *Acropolis*, which rises at one side of the

ruins, was the site of an Arabic castle, and is now occupied by a populous and squalid modern village. The site has been frequently visited by scholars, and little remained for the members of the expedition to do but to measure those monuments of which sufficient remains exist to make measurements valuable, and to search for inscriptions.

The work of the expedition in the Djebel Riha was little more than an extension of the researches in the mountains lying immediately to the north, the Djebel il-A'la and Djebel Bārisha. The architecture of this district presents only minor points of difference from that in the northern part. There are few structures distinctly pagan, though the influence of classic art is strong. The churches are of similar type, but the private houses and tombs are somewhat more pretentious. The detached villas of the wealthier class are remarkable for their size and elegance. Two towns are made up chiefly of these extensive structures. One of them is dated 395 A.D. Many of the tombs are very large and often richly ornamented. They are of various types and forms.

Public buildings are more common here than farther north. There are two baths published by M. de Vogüé, one from Serdjilla and one from Midjleyya. The former of these is particularly interesting, owing to the remarkable state of preservation in which it stands, and affords a very clear idea of the plan and arrangement of a public bath of the later imperial period. In removing some soil and débris from the central room of this building, for the purpose of finding the interior height of the wall, we were so fortunate as to disclose a large mosaic pavement, previously unknown, preserving an elaborate design in various colors and containing in its centre a Greek inscription in mosaic, giving the date of the building, the names of the donors, and other information.

Mosaic pavements seem to have been common in the district, but most of those which we found were badly damaged by the fall of the roofs and supporting columns, and often completely buried under large fallen building stones. An

interesting fragment was found in the church at Khirbit Hâss, and another in the church of Midjleyya.

This southern portion of the mountains is far richer in sculpture than the northern part. Two rock-cut tombs were discovered in Frikyā, a town high up on the mountains, adorned with sculptures in high relief, carved in the natural rock. In one of them a funeral banquet is represented in a group of natural size, well executed, but now sadly defaced. Opposite this group is a line of busts in high relief, and above it a low frieze of small figures in procession toward an altar. The face of the other tomb is decorated with low reliefs, and the walls of natural rock within bear figures in high relief, slightly less than natural size, representing pagan divinities. Not far from this place other reliefs were found carved on the face of rocks, and a sarcophagus adorned with genii bearing garlands. All of these sculptures are, with one notable exception, classic in subject and in treatment, and are suggestive in no particular of Oriental or so-called Byzantine style.

Having explored this district up to the point where investigations had been left off in the autumn, the expedition began its march due eastward, passing again over the section of Roman road and following the probable line of its course in the direction of the Djebel 'Îs, an isolated hill below the southern slope of which is a large mound that marks the site of ancient Khalkis and the unimportant modern settlement of Kinnisrîn. This ruin, which belongs to the same class as those of Hierapolis, Europos and Apamea, presents few remains above the surface, but would undoubtedly yield richly to the excavator.

We continued our eastward march, and soon found ourselves in a chain of low hills called the Djebel il-Haṣṣ, lying northwest and southeast to the southeast of Aleppo, and terminating to the south of the great salt lake Es-Sebkha, which appears on most of the maps. A number of ruined towns were found in these hills, one or two of which had been visited before, though not by M. de Vogüé. The remains are entirely in

black stone and much ruined, owing to the method in which the walls were built, small pieces of stone being laid in mortar or sometimes in clay. Only the doorways and colonnades were constructed of cut stone.

In the Djebel Shbêt, a group of low hills lying immediately to the east of the Djebel il-Ḥaṣṣ, the same conditions prevail, though in the former the buildings are in a rather better state of preservation.

In both of these districts the remains above ground are principally of churches and tombs; the outlines of numerous other buildings may be traced in mounds which mark the lines of fallen walls, which have gradually been buried in the dust that drifts in from the plains.

A marked contrast to the architectural remains in the mountains farther west is found in the use of rubble and concrete in walls faced with roughly dressed stone, in the employment of arches, of many *voussoirs*, in windows and as relieving arches above the lintels of doorways, and in the abandonment of the column, in many instances, for a pier built up of courses. All these are evidences not only of the effect of a different material, but the expression of a different idea. The inscriptions which we discovered threw light upon the date of these buildings, which was found to coincide with that of the Christian architecture in the mountains nearer Antioch. The monuments of these two districts may be classed with those of *Selemiyeh*, the black stone country farther south. Not only are the methods of construction similar and the details of the same nature, but the character of the inscriptions, the form of the letters, which are usually in relief, and the dates are of the same general class. As is illustrated in several tomb structures, quadrated dry masonry was not unknown, but this is invariably used as a facing to a concrete body or as quoins and levellers.

Decorative details are of the same class throughout, the grapevine ornament predominating for flat surfaces and the capitals conforming to a crude and simple debasement of the orders.

Figure sculpture, though not common, is represented by a number of flat reliefs, which, though crudely executed, are an interesting contribution to the history of early Christian sculpture.

Travelling a little east of south from Djebel Shbêt, we passed out of the basaltic country and at Isriyeh came into a white limestone country again. The above site shows few remains above the dust, except a fine little temple of the later Antonine age, standing on a rocky eminence above the buried ruins of the town. This temple, which preserves its cella in completeness, but nothing more, is an excellent example of the richness and over-elaboration of its age.

From Isriyeh the expedition moved, over an untravelled route, across the waterless tract of plain and mountains that lies between that place and Palmyra. At the latter well-known site a halt was made for photographing the ruins and making squeezes of some of the inscriptions. While here Dr. Littmann found a small number of unpublished Palmyraean inscriptions.

From Palmyra the expedition skirted the northwestern edge of the Arabian desert on the way to the Ḥaurân. At Dumêr the black stone country was entered again. Here a temple in that material was photographed and measured, and at Ḥarrân il-'Awâmîd, farther south, the remains of another temple in the same stone were photographed, but the site being completely covered by native houses, it was impossible to measure it. The Ḥaurân was entered at il-Haiyât, where an interesting monument and inscriptions of various dates, some published and others unpublished, were found. The expedition then moved to the eastern slope of the Ḥaurân and, with Tarba as a centre for the camp, made excursions to various sites on the eastern borders of the Hauran and into the desert to the Ruḥbeh Oasis. On the latter excursion Dr. Littmann copied a large number of Ṣafaïtic inscriptions, most of which were unknown.

The work of the expedition in the Ḥaurân was devoted chiefly to the study of monuments already known. A number



of known but unpublished temples, in classic style, were photographed, measured, and studied, with a view to publication. Some unpublished inscriptions, in Greek and in Nabataean, were found and copied.

The most important function of the photographs taken in the Ḥaurân will be to show the dissimilarity and lack of connection between the Christian architecture of this region and that in the mountains of northern Syria, a distinction that is lost sight of in M. de Vogüé's book. They show, in the first place, the great constructional difference, which is partly the result of the difference between black basalt and limestone as building materials. The churches of the north are built of large quadrated blocks perfectly cut and laid dry. Those of the Ḥaurân are built chiefly of loose broken stones faced with squared but undressed blocks, cut-stone being used only in arches, and for lintels and jambs. In this they resemble the churches in the black stone region described above. In the second place they illustrate a difference in plan and interior arrangement. The churches of northern Syria are planned with a longitudinal system of columnar and arched supports for wooden roofs, while those of the Ḥaurân have a transverse system of piers and arches supporting roofs of stone, and the use of stone in this way seems to have been a matter of choice, for the classic buildings in the same district were certainly provided with wooden roofs. Thirdly, the ornament of the northern churches is adapted from the decorations of classic edifices, while the churches in the south are almost destitute of ornament, although the architects had the finest classic models close at hand. In a few instances fragments of ornament are borrowed from temples which had been destroyed.

There are in the Ḥaurân, besides the classic and early Christian remains, a certain number of monuments which belong to neither of these categories. I refer to those buildings already treated to some extent by M. de Vogüé from Sî' and Suwêda. The fact that these monuments occur in ruins where Nabataean inscriptions are to be found, makes it seem not improbable that

they may have been of the same origin. The remains at Sîf are only fragmentary, though very extensive, but those at Suwêda include portions of a peripteral temple, a number of columns with sections of architrave and the lower courses of the cella wall, still intact. Though following the general plan and outline of a classic temple, these remains, which are, of course, in basalt, bear little resemblance in their details to those of classic architecture. The columns are widely spaced. Their bases sometimes take the form of inverted foliate capitals; the shaft is without diminution or entasis. The capitals bear only the slightest resemblance to the Roman Corinthian, while the architrave is made up of members entirely unclassic. The pilasters of the cella wall have bases which correspond to the inverted capital bases of some of the columns; the jambs of the main portal and the mouldings of the niches on either side of it, although exhibiting elements of classic style, are distinctly foreign in treatment. A large number of measurements and detail photographs were taken of these remains and fragments by the present expedition. A few Nabataean inscriptions, heretofore unknown, were found and copied, and squeezes were taken of all, both the published and unpublished.

Sculpture seems to have flourished in the Ḥaurân from an early period, but little is now in evidence except in sadly broken fragments. At il-Haiyât we found niches and bases of statues and references to them in the inscriptions, but few sculptures could be found, save two heads and one headless and armless figure. In Shaḳḳa a lion was found, sculptured in the round, and here, as in other places, niches for statuary and small fragments exist. In Sîf inscribed bases and pedestals for statues abound, but only small fragments of the statues to which they belonged. The iconoclastic spirit of the early Christians or of the later Mohammedans seems to have destroyed all vestiges of this art in the Ḥaurân.

The majority of the inscriptions found in the regions visited are Greek, as one would naturally expect. The expedition collected, however, inscriptions in eight different languages, —

Greek, Latin, Syriac, Hebrew, Palmyraean, Nabataean, Şafaïtic, and Kufic or Arabic. In addition to the copies or drawings of these inscriptions, squeezes were made so far as was practicable, and photographs were taken of the monuments. In the case of some, particularly the Şafaïtic inscriptions, of which no squeeze was possible, the letters were crayoned, and photographed both before and after the crayoning. Three hundred and eighty-six Greek inscriptions were found by the expedition, together with fifteen in Latin. Of these considerably less than half were known before, and some of these, especially such as were published only from copies made by Pococke, in 1737-42, were found to be somewhat different on the monuments themselves from what they appear in the publications. This is true in particular of the inscriptions on Djebel Shêkh Berekât, *C.I.G.* 4449-51, and in the tomb of Abedrapsas at Frikyā, *C.I.G.* 4463-4 and 9899. The date of the Frikyā tomb is given by Pococke as  $\Xi\Lambda\chi$ , which was emended by Boeckh to  $\Xi\Lambda\zeta$ , 237 (168 A.D. according to Boeckh), the true date being  $\zeta\Lambda\chi$ , 636 (*i.e.* 324 A.D.), which is perfectly clear to one who climbs up to it. Of the total number of Greek and Latin inscriptions 239 in Greek and 10 in Latin were found in the mountains of the north, between Ka'at il-Mudik, the ancient Apamea, and Djebel Shêkh Berekât: 73 in Greek and one in Latin were found in the Haurân. The Latin inscriptions, of which 10 out of the 15 are from Ka'at il-Mudik, are chiefly epitaphs of Roman soldiers. Two of the stelae are of special interest, as they have figures in relief above the inscriptions. One of the other inscriptions is in both Latin and Greek: one is a small fragment of what appears to be an inscription in honor of Septimius Severus. Another found at Khân il-Abyad, on the way from Palmyra to Damascus, while badly preserved, is interesting because of the characters, resembling minuscule letters, in which it is written. The last of the Latin inscriptions was found at Shehba in the Haurân, the ancient Philippopolis, and may throw some light on the history of the Emperor Philip. Most of the Greek inscriptions are Bible verses, generally inaccurate

quotations from the Septuagint version of the psalms, or simply religious formulae on the lintels of churches or houses, like that on the west entrance of the church of St. Sergius at Dâr Kîta, for example: Εἰς θεὸς (καὶ) ὁ Χριστὸς αὐτοῦ (καὶ) τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα. Βοήθη. Μη(νὸς) Δεσίου ἰνδ. εἰ τοῦ ἐπφ' ἔτους. Τοῦ ἁγίου Σεργίου. Inscriptions of this sort, or Christian symbols in various forms, or simple crosses, are found everywhere, especially in the northern country, over house doors and windows, on walls and porticoes and even in stables, so that they seem to be due to the superstition, rather than to the religious feeling of the people, and to have been intended merely to avert evil from the houses. In this, however, they were not permanently efficacious, and now they serve chiefly to date the buildings to which they are affixed. Eighty-five of the total number of inscriptions give dates numerically, reckoned according to various eras. Most of those in the mountains of the north are dated according to the era of Antioch, from 49 B.C.: elsewhere the Seleucid era is the most common. The dates of some other inscriptions are fixed by the name of the emperor, or may be determined from the internal evidence of the inscriptions themselves. The oldest dates are, of course, those on funerary monuments and pagan shrines. The earliest of these seems to be one on the Djebel Shêkh Berekât, *C.I.G.* 4449, ἔτους ελρ' (Pococke gives ΟΥΕΔΡ, which Boeckh read ἔτ]ου[ς] δρ'), probably 86 A.D. The era here is uncertain; but other dated inscriptions from this region belong unquestionably to the early part of the second century. Very few inscriptions of the third century were found, one of which is at Kāl'at il-Mudîk, one at Dûmêr, one or two at Shehba, and one at Shaḡḡa: the era of this last, however, is not certain. The great majority of the dated inscriptions are from the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries. The earliest certain date for a house or church is on a lintel found beside the road at the village of Sermeda, dated 341 A.D.: the inscription is Christian. A lintel *in situ* at Bâbisha bears the date 351 A.D. (possibly the ruins of a villa near Zebed are

to be dated 326 A.D.). The last date is on the church of St. Sergius at Bābiṣka, built in the year 609 A.D.

The inscriptions on church doorways are often of more than mere chronological value. They show something of the doctrines and the organization of the church. Some of them refer to the Trinity (Dār Ẹīta, 550 A.D., Selemīyeh, il-Bāra), to the Mother of God (Dērsēta, Selemīyeh, 604 A.D., Mektebeh, etc.), or to one or more of the saints: often they give the names and titles of various civil and ecclesiastical dignitaries under whose administration the buildings were erected. Besides the inscriptions on houses and churches, and the funerary inscriptions, a few Greek inscriptions of other sorts were found by the expedition. Some are boundary stones of church lands (of St. Stephen at Djūwāniye, 2 stelae, 554 A.D.; τοῦ ἁγίου Κηρύ[λ]ου at Selemīyeh, of the Mother of God at Ḥamā). Some, especially those from Ẹal'at il-Muḍik and Shehba, have historical value. One is a long inscription in mosaic in the pavement of the bath at Serdjilla: one is from the lintel of the gateway of a ruined city now called Khanāsir. Lastly, some are from pagan temples and shrines. Foremost among these are the inscriptions from the Djebel Shēkh Berekāt, a long day's march west of Aleppo. The summit of this bare and almost conical mountain is the site of a shrine and precinct sacred to two divinities, whose names are given in the inscriptions on the temenos wall, Δὲ Μαδβάχῳ καὶ Σελαμάνει, θεοῖς πατρώοις. Eight of these inscriptions were found by the expedition, including three which had already been published in the Greek corpus after copies by Pococke. These copies, however, were inaccurate and were amended by the editor, who comparing an inscription from Palmyra, *C.I.G.* 4480, published the first name Μάλβαχος which he thought might be identified with Ζεὺς Ἥλιος, while the name of the other he associated with Σελήνη. Dr. Littmann has called attention to the fact that the origin of these names may well be found in the Syriac words *madbakh* or *madbkhā*, "altar," and the Syriac *shlām*, Arabic *salām*, "peace." A day's journey south from this temenos, on the northern-

most spur of Djebel Barîsha, and looking off over the lower lying hills toward the Shêkh Berekât which towers above all the rest, stands a beautiful classic temple of the period of the Antonines. Immediately before it are still to be seen the foundations of an altar, to all appearances much older than the temple itself. The gateway of the temenos wall is still standing, and bears this inscription,  $\Delta\iota\ \text{Βωμῶ}\ \mu\epsilon\gamma\acute{\alpha}\lambda\omega\ .\ .\ .\ \tau\acute{o}\nu\ \pi\acute{\upsilon}\lambda\omicron\nu\ \acute{\alpha}\nu\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\eta\sigma\alpha\nu$ . Evidently those who built these walls were worshippers at what to them were ancient shrines, and neither the god of the one place nor the god of the other had a name.

The Syriac inscriptions are the more important because of the scarcity of epigraphical monuments in that language. Furthermore, M. de Vogüé, in his 'Notes d'Epigraphie Araméenne,' in the *Journal Asiatique*, Paris, 1898, p. 24, has said: "L'inscription de Dehhes — est seul de son espèce au milieu d'une région, dont toutes les inscriptions sont rédigées en grec." This expedition, however, has for publication fifteen Syriac inscriptions from the country about Dêhes. These are (A) from the Djebel il-A'la: (1) Two fragments of the same lintel, at Beshindelâya, (B) from the Djebel Bârîsha and the Djebel Ḥalaḡah: (2) The famous inscription on the baptistery at Dêhes, which has been published several times already, but to which a thorough cleaning of the stone has given a new and presumably final rendering. (3) The inscription from the baptistery at Khirbit il-Khaṭîb, dated 586, *i.e.* 537 A.D. (the last figure is not certain). (4) The lintel of the church in Bâḡirḡa, partly destroyed, giving the names of those who built the doorway. There are traces of the date, which seems to coincide with that of the Greek inscription on the same lintel. (5) A short fragment from Bâḡirḡa, containing the beginning of an inscription in large and well-formed letters. This fragment has been brought to America by the expedition. (6 and 7) Two inscriptions from the church at Khirbit Ḥasan — one over the west door on the south side, the other at the side of the east door in the same wall. The former of these is the more important. It is a long inscription, of the year 556 "of the era of Antioch,"

*i.e.* 507 A.D., giving an account of the expenses for the building of the church: the other gives the names of certain men who had to do with the building. (8 and 9) Graffiti in a cave near Mâr Sâba, giving names of monks. (10) Graffiti in a tomb at Bâfittîn. (11) Fragment of a large inscription found among the débris within the ruined walls of a church at Dâr Ẹîta. The characters of this last are the best and most regular Syriac letters known up to this time. A Syriac inscription, in exceedingly fine letters, however, has been found recently in the ruins of a monastery in Africa by Dr. R. Moritz. In the Dâr Ẹîta inscription the words "*Praised*" . . . "*Trinity*" . . . "*His Pity*" are to be read. Probably this was the church of the Trinity, and thus, at least, the *terminus a quo* of the inscription is fixed approximately. (12) An inscription on two panels in the upper story of a colonnade in Bâbişka, of the year 596 "era of Antioch," *i.e.* 547 A.D., telling when and by whom this colonnade was built. In the inscription the word *estewā* = the Greek *στοά* is certain. (13) A single name, in large letters, on a column in Bâbişka. (14) Graffito on the jamb of the church door at Ksêdjbek. (15) Graffito on the church at Ẹaş il-Benât, on the Roman road between Hârim and Sermeda. Besides these, there were found (C) at Mektebek in the Djebel il-Ḥaşş three inscriptions, two of which contain verses from the Bible and are valuable as contributions to the history of Syriac writing. Finally (D) at Zebed, one inscription saying that this is the "*thronos*" of Rabbûlâ, and two others giving Syriac words in Greek letters.

Few Hebrew inscriptions were found. Among these are several graffiti from il-Bâra which are of unusual importance. Two others are from the synagogue at Têdif and date from the Middle Ages. One half of these is in Hebrew, the other half in Arabic, but written in Hebrew letters. They refer to the building of various parts of this, the "Synagogue of Ezra the Scribe." Finally the so-called "synagogue" inscription in Palmyra: this has been published before.

One would naturally suppose that the exploration of Palmyra

had been complete, so far as monuments upon the surface are concerned, and that there remains little for epigraphists to do, except in connection with excavations; but the expedition found, in course of a brief visit, that there are still many unpublished inscriptions to be found among the ruins, and especially in the houses of the modern village that clusters about the ruined temple of the Sun. No less than seven new inscriptions were discovered, several of which are merely tombstones bearing single names; but two were important honorary inscriptions, on columns of the temple of the Sun, dating from the years 8 A.D. and 40 A.D. respectively. Two others were dedicatory inscriptions upon altars, the first to the gods 'Aglibôl and Malkibôl, and dating from February, 23 A.D. The second, to the hitherto unknown deity שֵׁן אֱלֹהִים, and dating from July, 131 A.D. Besides these a number of badly weathered inscriptions were worked out, partly from the stones, and with the aid of copies of Waddington's publication of the Greek texts which appear with them. In addition to this work, it was found to be not unprofitable to compare copies of the published inscriptions with the monuments themselves, as a number of errors were detected in this manner, even in addition to what A. D. Mordtmann has done (v. *Neue Beiträge zur Kunde Palmyras*, München, 1875). The funerary inscription published by Lagrange (*Revue Biblique*, I, p. 433-438) and by Sobernheim (*Beiträge zur Assyriologie*, 1900), and the inscription beneath a relief, dedicated to the gods Aršū and 'Azizū, published by Sobernheim, were compared and corrected. But the work of the expedition in Palmyra was necessarily cursory.

Among the Nabataean inscriptions found by the expedition is one which has proved to be among the oldest inscriptions of the northern part of the Nabataean kingdom. This was found near the road from ẖanawât to Si'. It is a stele of the year 308, evidently of the Seleucid era and therefore of the year 5-4 B.C. The letters are very well cut and perfectly preserved. Besides this two fragments of the long inscription of the temple at Si' were found, in addition to the fragments



already known, one of which gives the name Mo'aiyerū (the father of Maleikat, who built the temple), and the other only the words "the inner and the outer temple." Lastly, the inscription on the altar at Kanawât seen by Bochart in 'Ireh, and now in Suwêda, and published by Ewing and by Sachau, was carefully copied and photographed.

In making an excursion into the Ruḥbeh, Dr. Littmann discovered a number of sites abounding in the so-called Şafaïtic inscriptions. These crude writings, which are found in limited areas, but covering the uneven surface of the dark rocks for many yards in all directions, contain seldom more than names and genealogies, but the variety of form and size of the letters is astonishing. These names were found to be still perpetuated, in many cases, among the Bedawins. The inscriptions from this region published by M. Halévy were of this fragmentary type, and those found by M. Dussaud, whose book upon the subject has just been published, were of the same character. The inscriptions now described, especially those of il-'Isâwî, were not only almost all plainly written and very nearly complete, but present whole sentences after the names and genealogies. The presence of these new words is of importance in facilitating the study of the language. While the letters are very closely related to the South Arabian alphabet, it is not possible as yet to identify the dialect. Dr. Littmann has identified, in these new inscriptions, the signs for the sounds represented in Arabic by the letters *ث ذ ض ط غ* which have not been recognized before. The photographs referred to above will, it is hoped, facilitate the study of these peculiar and interesting inscriptions.

About fifty Kufic and Arabic inscriptions and graffiti were found and copied. Most of these are interesting; only a few important. The most remarkable are two richly ornamented inscriptions on the mosque at Hâss, one dated 456 of the Arabic era, and also a short Kufic inscription in Kal'at il-Muḍiḡ of the year 445, and the Kufic inscriptions in Sele-miyeh, one of the year 105 or 150, and another of the year

481. A tombstone near Bāmuḳḳa, in the Djebel Bārisha, belongs to the period of the transition from the Kufic to the Arabic writing.

The members of the expedition, with the exception of Mr. Huxley, left Syria about the middle of June. Mr. Huxley remained to continue his anthropological studies in the interior. The tangible results, consisting of material for the making of new maps, photographs, measurements and notes of the architecture, copies and squeezes of the inscriptions, together with a number of squeezes of architectural details, were sent at once to the United States, where a full publication is being prepared.

Princeton University has very kindly offered the use of commodious quarters, in the new library building, for the work of making the casts and preparing the other material for publication. This publication, which it is hoped will appear within two years, is to contain, besides maps of four separate districts and a large route map, a detailed account of the architecture of the regions explored. A large number of photographs, with plans and elevations, will appear to illustrate some of the monuments, published in drawings by M. de Vogüé, and many of the unpublished buildings, which are of interest as being dated or as illustrating new phases of style. Particular attention will be paid to the unpublished pagan monuments of architecture and sculpture, to churches and baptisteries, to the various types of tombs, and to domestic architecture, of which this region furnishes the most extensive and varied remains of any portion of the world. The inscriptions, both Classic and Semitic, will be published in the form of careful copies drawn to scale and with photographs both of the inscription and the monument on which it appears, wherever that is found practicable.

The gratitude of all interested in this expedition is due, in no small measure, to his Excellency Hamdy Bey, director of the Imperial Museum at Constantinople, for the generous interest which he has shown in its success from the very

beginning and for his invaluable counsel. The members of the expedition had the honor of being the representatives of this Museum, with instructions to report to the director the location and condition of the monuments in these regions and to make suggestions for their preservation; and it was through his influence that the approval and coöperation of his Majesty's government was secured and the work made possible.

HOWARD CROSBY BUTLER.

PRINCETON,  
*November 12, 1900.*